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## INFORMATION

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October 16, 1970

## MEMORANDUM FOR DR. KISSINGER

MORI C05099268 Pgs 1-2, 9-12 Only.

FROM: John H. Holdridge

ARMY review completed.

SUBJECT: Status Of The Accelerated Pacification Campaign

In response to our request for field comments on the status of the accelerated pacification campaign, CIA has produced a memorandum which contains reports from the senior CIA officers in the four military regions. (Tab A). A summary of their comments follow.

Military Region I. The pacification program is moving ahead slowly. New land is being provided for settlers, and roads are being opened to allow these settlers to get their produce to market. Militarily, enemy units are continuing to try to push into the coastal lowlands but without success. A major impetus behind pacification in MR I is recognition of the need to get as much done as possible before additional US troop withdrawals take place.

Military Region II. There are few signs that the GVN's accelerated campaign is yielding much in the way of results. This is particularly disturbing because the situation in four and possibly five of the II provinces has regressed since last year. There has been some progress; pacification in Binh Dinh has recently picked up because of the deployment of Korean troops into a pacification role. The same may also be done in Phu Yen Province.

Military Region III. The GVN has not taken advantage of the diversion of enemy forces into Cambodia to register additional pacification progress. Various officials have pressed Lt. General Tri, the MR III commander, to take advantage of the military lull by pushing the accelerated campaign, but the past three months have been wasted in attempting to get the program moving. The performance of the GVN's various pacification assets continues to be spotty and mediocre.

Military Region IV. The new MR IV commander, aided by some recently appointed and more effective province chiefs, has been taking advantage of the situation to push the pacification effort. However, the emphasis is

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on extending the GVN's presence into remaining Communist strongholds rather than on consolidation and development. The GVN recently established itself in an area of Kien Hoa Province which contained one of the largest remaining concentrations of population still under VC control. A series of fire support bases will also be established in remaining VC base areas throughout the delta.

Comment. So far during the accelerated campaign, HES statistics have continued to edge upward at about the same pace as during the first half of the year. In view of the field comments and the extremely low level of enemy military action during July and August, however, it seems clear that the GVN's accelerated campaign has not resulted in a noticeably stronger pacification effort. What success the GVN has attained has been more in established military and paramilitary programs, rather than in the newer internal security and political fields.

CIA reports that Ambassador Colby and President Thieu are fully aware of these shortcomings and are consulting on measures to revitalize the current campaign. Thieu has not yet announced a revised program, but he will apparently extend the program an additional three months beyond the original expiration date of October 31.

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COUNCIL

7 October 1970

# MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Current Status of the Pacification Program in South Vietnam

1. The momentum in pacification achieved during most of 1969 has not been sustained this year. The slowdown has been the result of numerous factors, including a decrease in areas available for immediate expansion, the diversion of national attention to other pressing problems, the introduction of new and unfamiliar political and socio-economic objectives, a degree of apathy which accompanied the improved security situation, and in some areas intensified anti-pacification efforts by the enemy.

2. The basic strategy of the 1970 Pacification and Development Plan differed from that of the preceding year by concentrating on consolidating GVN control rather than on rapid expansion into new territory. The underlying purpose was to effect an attitudinal change in the population from passive recognition of GVN administrative control to active participation on the government's side in the political life of the country. The goal, originally set for the end of 1970 but later advanced to the end of October, was to bring 90 percent of the people within the A and B security/development category, with the remainder upgraded to at least a C category. To this end eight basic objectives were established: improving security; neutralizing the VC infrastructure; perfecting the PSDF; developing local administration; implementing the Chieu Hoi program; improving the life of war victims; establishing an effective information system; and building prosperity.

3. Progress during the first phase of the 1970 plan (January-June) was spotty, and actual regression occurred in a number of provinces, particularly in MR 2. Moreover, some of the recorded progress can be attributed to the absence of Communist forces in the border provinces rather than to GVN initiatives. When it became apparent that there was general nation-wide letdown on the part of the GVN, Ambassador Colby

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convinced President Thieu that measures had to be taken to restore the previous year's momentum and to meet projected goals. Accordingly, a program was decreed on 13 June which called for a special pacification and development campaign that would run from 1 July to 31 October. The president directed that particular emphasis be placed on economic and social development, which is the main focus of the special program. In addition, the plan emphasized the People's Information program, active participation by village and hamlet officials and PSDF in self-defense, better coordinated activity and mutual support by Main Force, RF, PF, PSDF and National Police, rapid conviction of VCI and early judgment on VC suspects to reduce the detention center population, and special training for technical cadre at Vung Tau in order that they can assist in motivating the people.

4. According to the HES statistics shown below consistent, but not spectacular, progress has been made this year on a countrywide basis, with the exception of the month of April when a slight regression took place. It should be noted that the HES statistics are most responsive to the level of enemy activity. Thus, the relative quiet of the enemy military forces since this past spring is the prime cause of the progress in 1970. Significant intangibles such as the impact of terrorism and threats on popular attitudes, enemy proselyting efforts and VC penetrations, are not measured by HES to any acceptable degree, even though they might have decisive impact on long-run allied objectives:

<u>1970</u>	<u>GVN (A, B, C)</u>	<u>Contested (D, E)</u>	<u>VC</u>	<u>Population</u>
Jan	87.9%	8.7%	1.4%	17,642.9
Feb	88.5%	8.2%	2.2%	17,636.4
Mar	89.7%	7.5%	2.0%	17,723.6
Apr	88.9%	8.3%	2.0%	17,758.1
May	89.7%	8.1%	1.4%	17,789.7
Jun	91.1%	7.1%	1.4%	17,897.3
Jul	92.4%	6.0%	1.1%	17,923.2
Aug	92.8%	5.5%	1.0%	18,014.9

NOTE: Each month, a certain portion of South Vietnam's population cannot be evaluated; thus totals do not add to 100%.

5. Despite the onset of the special emphasis program, pacification efforts improved only slightly, and the results so far have been mixed. In June, the Phoenix program met its monthly goal of 1,800 neutralizations for the first time this year, dropped to 1,646 in July, but increased sharply to 2,603 in August. The HES security/development score for the A, B, and C-rated population moved from 91.1 percent on 30 June to 9.28 percent on 31 August. The A and B-rated population moved from 77.1 percent to 78.5 percent in the same period. The territorial forces continue to show improvement and are meeting their strength goals, although performance remains uneven because of the leadership problem. The PSDF is not meeting its strength and training goals, but its performance is gradually improving. The program to expand the police is lagging, with a 31 July police strength of 88,200 against a 1970 goal of 122,000.

6. Political and socio-economic ratings are showing improvement primarily due to increased activities in village self-help programs and refugee benefit payments. The influx of over 200,000 ethnic Vietnamese from Cambodia has made dubious the 1970 goal of clearing all refugees from the rolls. Although Chieu Hoi results are running some 15-20 percent behind last year due to the slower expansion of the GVN presence into the countryside, the number of defectors is still significant. The People's Information program suffers from poor management, low quality cadre, and lack of funds, and is rated as poor in most provinces. Local administration has been strengthened this year by the holding of both local and national elections, the training of local officials, and the granting of more autonomy. More than 95 percent of the hamlets and villages now have elected governments and some 25,000 local officials had been trained by the end of June. Although distribution of land under the new land reform program has barely begun, the framework is being established. Some 4,000 officials are being trained, aerial surveys are being made, and payment of rent by the tenants is no longer required.

7. On the other hand, enthusiasm for accelerated pacification has been at less than optimum. To some extent this can be attributed to the fact that national and local leaders have been preoccupied with such things as student and veterans demonstrations, economic problems, the 30 August senatorial elections and the Cambodian problem. In some areas, local officials have tended to give short shrift to calls for a greater effort while enjoying the greater peace, security, and prosperity that has arrived in many parts of the country.

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8. Except in northern MR 3, the diversion of Communist assets and interests to Cambodia last spring did not open up large areas of South Vietnam for exploitation by the GVN. The enemy forces utilized in Cambodia were already deployed in Cambodia or in the areas close to the Cambodian border, while the VC anti-pacification forces (local forces and guerrillas) remained in place. Moreover, the Communists in several provinces broke up their Main Force units into smaller components for use in a high-priority, anti-pacification effort. Some areas in South Vietnam suffered a decline in the GVN security posture due to the deployment of ARVN forces to Cambodia.

9. We queried our regional-officers-in-charge (Danang, Nha Trang, Bien Hoa, Can Tho) for their on-the-scene impressions of the special pacification and development program. Their replies follow:

a. Military Region 1. The accelerated pacification program was launched in MR 1 against a military backdrop that already had enemy and allied forces pitted against each other because of sizeable enemy efforts to push into lowlands. Here the enemy took a severe beating on three separate occasions in the last four months, with RF and PF playing a significant and successful role each time. On the non-military scene, the pacification program continues to move ahead, albeit at a slower pace. An extensive land clearing program which is now some six months old continues to provide new land for settlers and a number of roads are being opened up to aid these new settlers get their products to markets and to give them access to coastal areas for expanded fishing efforts. A major impetus behind the haste in pacification efforts in MR 1 is recognition of the need to get as much done as possible during time remaining in which fairly sizeable numbers of U.S. troops are available to help in the overall effort.

b. Military Region 2. There are not many bright signs that the government's intended acceleration of pacification is yielding much in way of results in this region. This is particularly disturbing because the situation in four and possibly five provinces has regressed from the progress made last year. There has been some forward movement, however. An increase in pacification efforts in Binh Dinh Province has resulted from the deployment of ROK forces into a pacification mission. This was done primarily to offset the loss of U.S. forces and to release ARVN units to the Highlands to cope with the NVA. The same may be done in Phu Yen Province. Among

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other efforts to improve security in and around Dalat, the ARVN 53rd Regiment of the 23rd Division has moved into the area to conduct search and patrol operations. In the past two weeks 49 enemy KIA have been reported by the 53rd which is a drastic improvement over the past performance of this mediocre regiment.

c. Military Region 3. Available data suggests that in MR 3 the GVN has not taken anything like a maximum advantage of the situation created by the diversion of VC Main Force units from this region. MR 3 should be a major recipient of opportunities provided by the fact that the preponderance of enemy Main Force strength in MR 3 moved into Cambodia. Since June, enemy initiated activity throughout MR 3 has remained at a relatively low level with enemy efforts directed primarily in support of local forces and guerrilla operations against Vietnamization and pacification programs. CORDS, MR 3 and II FFV have pressed Lt. General Do Cao Tri, MR 3 Commander, to take advantage of the lull and move ahead with an accelerated pacification campaign. Three months appear to have been wasted in getting this campaign off dead center, with some progress being shown in September. Phung Hoang capacity to target the VCI remains spotty with overall results mediocre. The territorial forces account for less than 20 percent of enemy casualties and the leadership of RF appears weak and there is a lack of aggressiveness. Some strides are being made in respect to the PSDF, but these are accompanied by much self-generated ballyhoo. There is no noticeable improvement in the National Police effort in MR 3 except very recently in the field of resources control, again as a result of II FFV pressures. The National Police Field Forces (NPFF) remain virtually useless. Since May, an appreciable part of the Special Police effort has been diverted to screening repatriates from Cambodia, with a loss of momentum in the effort against the VCI. Food denial programs and the cumulative effect of some plowing appear to have hurt the VC more in MR 3 than any other pacification activities or programs.

d. Military Region 4. Of all the military regions, MR 4 has been taking the best advantage of the current situation to push its pacification effort. New and more effective province chiefs were appointed in some provinces, and the arrival of Major General Ngo Quang Truong as Region Commander

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probably is giving impetus to the GVN's accelerated campaign. He is establishing fire support bases throughout the Delta to harass the VC in their base areas and to deny re-establishment of VC secure areas in the future. An operation was started 30 September to clear the VC from Three Sisters' Mountains and ARVN has already occupied two of seven mountains (Base Area 400) and expects to occupy the third shortly. A marine brigade is currently operating in lower An Xuyen Province against Base Area 482 and other operations are planned against Base Areas 490, 470 and in the U Minh Forest against Base Area 483. In Kien Hoa province, one of the old VC strongpoints, a recent influx of ralliers is cited as proof of pacification efforts there. There were 772 ralliers in August and over 300 in September. In fact, Kien Hoa has led the country for nine straight weeks in ralliers.

10. President Thieu has the question of how to revitalize the accelerated pacification program very much in mind, but as of now he has not announced a revised program. His recent appointment of a new MR 2 Commander and several new province chiefs was directly related to this problem. He is discussing the situation with Ambassador Colby and presumably action will be taken to tackle the problem with renewed vigor. It is probable that the current program will be extended beyond the 31 October date.



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## NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

ACTION  
INFORMATION

October 16, 1970

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*As I see it there was no problem. We are cutting up the country in small bits with much less than we need.*

Military Region I. The pacification program is moving ahead slowly. New land is being provided for settlers, and roads are being opened to allow these settlers to get their produce to market. Militarily, enemy units are continuing to try to push into the coastal lowlands but without success. A major impetus behind pacification in MR I is recognition of the need to get as much done as possible before additional US troop withdrawals take place.

*Oct 22 4 1970*

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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

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September 10, 1970

~~MEMORANDUM FOR DR. KISSINGER~~

FROM: ~~John H. Holdridge~~

SUBJECT: ~~Secretary Laird's Pacification Assessment~~

Secretary Laird has sent you a memorandum (Tab A) in which he assesses the current status of pacification. The major points follow.

~~Pacification results during the first six months of 1970~~ were spotty. The major reason for this was that the GVN's attention was diverted by other problems.

-- Consolidation of security at the village level, a major objective of the 1970 plan, is proceeding, although undramatically. Improvement in arming and training the Peoples Self Defense Force continues, and this force now provides the primary defense for over 2,000 hamlets.

-- The only pacification setback this year occurred in April, largely because of a shift in Communists tactics as they recognized the threat posed by pacification.

-- Neutralization of the VC infrastructure continues to be most effective against the lower levels, and the overall party organization remains viable. Additional efforts to strengthen the police at the local level and to improve the selection and training of Phoenix advisors are underway.

-- The local security mission is increasingly being assumed by territorial forces and ARVN must concurrently assume the mission of backing up the territorials as U.S. forces withdraw. This aspect of Vietnamization is being stressed.

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-- Although the majority of goals for the first six months (as contained in the 1970 overall plan) were not achieved, progress is being registered in each of the eight basic pacification programs. President Thieu has recognized the need to refocus attention on pacification and has initiated an accelerated campaign.

-- Weaknesses still exist in social and economic areas of refugee care, veterans affairs, inflation, and student unrest. These are being addressed, although no quick solutions are foreseen.

~~Comment. This brief assessment clearly considers GVN strength and action to be more important factors than enemy efforts in determining the current status of pacification. This is a conclusion which the Bureau of Intelligence and Research at State also voiced in its recent review of pacification. While that may be true over the long run, it is also true that the level of Viet Cong activity can cause a lot of fluctuation in the statistics over any given period.~~

The assessment also refers to the GVN's accelerated campaign, but does not provide a clear idea of how it is proceeding even though it has been underway since July 1. We have asked the field for comments, and will report to you on the accelerated campaign shortly.